

should win. The Non-intervention Committee, appointed to supervise the non-intervention agreement and sitting in London under the chairmanship of Lord Plymouth, was a farce; for the Dictators unblushingly continued their armed intervention, despite the prohibition by the Committee in February 1937 of enlistment or dispatch of volunteers. The only occasion on which we asserted ourselves was at the Nyon Conference in September 1937, called to deal with the destruction of British and other merchantmen in the Mediterranean by unidentified submarines. Neither Germany nor Italy attended, but the latter accepted the scheme of zones of patrol by British, French and Italian ships, and the nuisance was speedily brought to an end.

British opinion, which had been almost unanimous in regard to the rights and wrongs of the Abyssinian conflict, was deeply divided by the issues in Spain. Right wing opinion generally sympathized with Franco, Left wing with the Republican Government, while many Englishmen were disgusted by the savagery of both sides. A further source of disagreement concerned the strategic issues involved in the triumph of one or other of the combatants. Champions of the Republic argued that its overthrow would weaken our position in the Mediterranean and endanger French communications with North Africa by tying Spain to our potential enemies. In other words, a victory for Franco would mean a victory for Mussolini and Hitler. Franco's champions retorted that the Spaniards, a proud and independent race, would decline to alienate territory and would stubbornly resist foreign control. The spokesmen of the Government inclined to the latter view, though they abstained from expressing sympathy with either side. "We wish Spain to emerge with

possessions and in-
dependence intact," declared Mr. Eden, who
quoted Wellington's dictum: " There is no country in Europe in
the affairs of which foreigners can interfere with as little
profit as in Spain." The value of these conflicting forecasts
was soon to
be decided by the winner's pro-Axis attitude in a
new European
war. Whatever might be said for the intentions of
the British
Government, its Spanish policy suggested a
mood of peace
at almost any price. It certainly presented a
striking contrast
to the ruthless vigour of the Axis Powers,
determined to secure
the triumph of their *protegi* and unafraid of the
gravest risks.

In the so-called Gentleman's Agreement
between England
and Italy concluded on January 2, 1937,
the signatories